the country particularly in Haryana as the project was started in previous Five Year Plan;

(b) whether Government are aware of the colossal loss to the farmers due to attaining a huge growth of Eucalyptus plants which affected crops of the farmers;

(c) whether Government are aware of the ecology and environment experts' opinion that this plant is not fit for road side, cropped area, and canal courses;

(d) whether the financial loss has been incurred by the farmers as well as the State of Haryana as a result of the plantation;

(e) how much funds were swandled away due to this project; and

(f) whether the farmers have been provided any compensation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) No, Sir. No project under the name Eucalyptus Plantation Project has been implemented during the previous Five Year Plan.

(b) No information regarding colossal loss to the farmers due to attaining a huge growth of eucalyptus plants which affected crops of the farmers has come to the notice of the Government.

(c) Research work undertaken in this respect has established that there is no positive evidence that Eucalyptus is not fit for road side, cropped area and canal courses.

(d) State Government of Haryana has informed that there has been no financial loss to the farmers in the Haryana State.

(e) No project under the name Eucalyptus plantation project has been implemented during the previous five year plan and thus question of swindling does not arise.

(f) Does not arise.

Depredation of forest land

634. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the gradual depredation of forest land during the years 1991, 1992 and in 1993;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps have been taken to arrest it and with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Assessment of the forest cover of the country is done once in two years on the basis of visual inter-pretation of satellite imagery. The latest assessment, documented in the State of Forest Report, 1991 by the Forest Survey of India indicates that there has been a net increase of 560 sq. kms. in the forest cover of the country as compared to the earlier assessment as documented in the State of Forest Report 1989.

(b) and (c) The increase registered in the forest cover is on account of a number of steps taken by the Government. These include improved protection measures, conservation and development of forests, rehabilitation of degraded forests, social forestry schemes, participatory forest management programmes etc. These activities continue to get increased attention from the Government.

Decrease in tiger population

635. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the tiger population has considerably decreased as per census conducted by the Forest Department and if so, what are the details thereof; and

(b) what are the reasons therefor and what steps have been taken to remedy the situation?